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No. 1.

OUR GENERAL

U. S. GRANT.

OLMSTED & WELWOOD,

SUN BUILDING, N. Y.

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OUR GENERAL.

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OUR GENERAL,

ULYSSES S. GRANT.

HE youth of a nation should know its great military chieftains, together with those of other nations of the age. Their reading may not have been sufficiently extensive to embrace so wide a range as this knowledge would imply, hence the necessity of every man contributing his quota to the common fund.

Thoughts are evolved in one mind not perceived by another, producing constantly increasing light on subjects supposed to be well understood, illuminating a present or passing theme, or calling up, as from oblivion, the recollections of schoolboy days or academic toil.

The advancement of the young men

of this nation and a recreative review, is the only apology for this paper.

“*OUR GENERAL*,” Ulysses S. Grant, is a most profitable study for American youth.

Now that the war-scenes are passed, and events are receding into distant, more fixed, and historic perspective, things connected with that memorable four years are falling into their relative and appropriate positions, and the characters of the men of those eventful years are assuming their proper proportions.

As sober history takes her venerable scroll, and makes up her imperishable records of men, it would be incomplete without names. Thus, American history has been, and still will be, written. American annals must go upon the pages of Time’s ponderous folios, but not without some noble lines for U. S. Grant.

The writer of the present day cannot fix the true position of Grant. Like all other heroes, he must “sleep his last

sleep, and fight his last battle," ere his true character can be *fully* weighed and appreciated.

But we may even here be permitted to draw a few parallels with other great captains, presenting points of likeness or dissimilarity, in order that *our* general may stand forth in his true and approximate greatness.

GRANT IS DISTINGUISHED FOR A FAITHFUL STUDY OF HIS ANTAGONIST.

From Bishop Leonidas Polk, General of the so-called "Confederate States of America," to Robert E. Lee, the heaviest brain of the "Great Rebellion," he knew his man.

Whether it is Polk at Columbus, Ky., Buckner, Floyd and Co., at Fort Donelson, Beauregard at Pittsburg Landing, Pemberton, Johnson & Co., at Vicksburg, Bragg, Davis & Co., at Chattanooga, Lee, Longstreet and Co., at the

Wilderness, Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, Petersburg and Richmond; all and each were successively read, studied, understood and conquered by this far-seeing commander.

Whether in planning his campaign, in marshalling his battalions, or executing long and dangerous marches; whether in strategic movements, in terrible sieges, in quick and sudden advances, or in negotiations, he was ever master of his foe.

It may be safely said that Grant always knew who was his antagonist and what he was doing, at all hours, day or night.

From the sound in camp he was able to interpret the movements of his enemy, and by his silence was able to discover his concealment.

A remarkable instance of this faculty is shown in the struggles of Lee in his endeavors to extricate himself from the more than iron grasp in which Grant

held him and his legions at Richmond, during the summer of 1864.

Breckenridge had made every possible effort to render successful his famous attack on Washington. Lee had spared every possible man from his intrenchments at Richmond, for this all-important strategic movement for the capture of the seat of government. Lee was watching his calm but persistent adversary, hoping that he would instantly dash off in defence of the Capitol.

To stimulate this movement, Lee sent to the secessionists at Washington most startling reports of troops coming up through the Shenandoah Valley, that the City of Washington, about to be captured, was already cut off from all communications with the North, and the city itself—the prize of the race—was in the highest fever of excitement, not knowing what was to be its fate.

All sorts of rumors were flying, with some at the North hoping, even *praying*,

that the "Confederates" might come down like the eagle's swoop upon the defenceless city; while others were uttering every conceivable conjecture in reference to the movements of Grant, in regard to the protection of Washington. Sunday morning came, and with it the "Old Sixth Corps"—twenty thousand strong—veterans from City Point.

None were more astonished than the rebels, when they beleaguered Fort Stevens and found the too well-remembered "Sixth" in their front.

It is related, that on that Sunday morning, a civilian at City Point told Grant the news he had just heard, that Lee had sent 90,000 veteran troops from the intrenchments at Richmond, to the attack on Washington. Mark the laconic reply of Grant—"I wish he had sent 30,000 even,"—showing that he well knew the strength of his antagonist, and how many troops he could spare for a distant movement. It is said, that a

single glance at the field position of his opponent revealed to him, as by intuition, the whole field-plot of the enemy.

His manner of treatment of opposing commanders was various. To Buckner he was bold, short, and defiant; while to Lee he was gentle, firm, and deprecatory, and showed a disposition to reason with his enemy, on the possibilities of a hopeless cause.

Flags of truce never caught this wary fighter off his guard; nor did the suit for "armistice," for funeral purposes, find him disposed to sleep, while his cunning foe outran him to the next goal. This happy faculty of reading his man made him master of the mentality of each of his numerous antagonists. He saw their powers and defects; their strength and their weaknesses. He divined all their needs, and was ready to press these necessities to their defeat and capture.

He seemed to know to the very day when their resources must fail, and how. Vicksburg was reduced to nearly absolute starvation, while Grant was ordering his well-fed legions to assault the famishing hosts of the enemy, when Pemberton saw at a glance that his army was not only now as game in the *hands*, but had been before in the *head* of Grant.

Bragg was strongly intrenched in the mountain-fastnesses of Mission and Lookout ranges, and felt himself secure in his strong position ; doubting not that he would soon be in possession of Chattanooga.

But Grant must flank his antagonist by Hooker's movement on his left and rear, fight him by Sherman's Division on his extreme right, while he should boldly meet him in the face, by his own deadly onset upon his centre.

RICHMOND had been fortified to the last degree, until the friends of the Rebel

cause, both in this country and in Europe, had boasted of its impregnability. But Grant fought his way up to, and around the flanks of each stronghold to the last battle at Five Forks, at the extreme right of Lee's fortifications at PETERSBURG.

It may be well, at this point, to turn our attention to other great captains, in whom this quality stands out prominently.

Alexander the Great read the position of the Persian army, from the moment his Grecian Phalanx crossed the swollen waves of the Granicus, and at once plunged into the Persian hosts drawn up to oppose him on the other shore.

His plan, in every engagement, was to drive a diamond-shaped phalanx of Grecians into the Persian centre, thus breaking into two disordered halves the army of his antagonist, and wheeling upon either half in turn, dash them in pieces.

Cæsar, too, bore the same characteristics.

Whether grappling with the Gallic princes far toward the Zuyder Zee, or with Pompey on the plains of Pharsalia, he everywhere gave the most ample evidence of knowing his antagonist. On every page of his Commentaries, the student finds traces of the most minute study of the arts, manoeuvres, plans, works, and positions of his adversary.

He had an eagle's eye to see, and an eagle's talons to seize his foe; while he could not be deceived by the most subtle strategy, or beaten by the most powerful legions.

This intimate knowledge of his enemy prompted the order to "aim at the faces of the knights of Rome," for thousands of the handsomest young men of Rome, of Patrician birth, were in the saddle, among the cavalry of Pompey's army.

His favorite method of crushing an adversary was to break his centre, or flank a wing. Cæsar triumphed, but Rome lost her liberties, when the legions

of Pompey broke in the centre, on the plains of Pharsalia.

All this is pre-eminently true of the great Napoleon. From his first grand conflict in Italy, at the bridge of Lodi, to the last terrible encounter at Waterloo, this great general was a skilful reader of his antagonist.

Perhaps no leader of any host has ever been confronted with so many and varied enemies on the battle-field. But he seemed to read his men by the page and chapter.

It was only necessary for him to get sight of the battle-plan of the foe through his glass, and he was ready at once to open the game.

Human nature was ever as an open volume to the eye of Napoleon, but never more so than when a page was presented, as a rival, in the vesture of Mars. Not a feature escaped his perusal, and having gained knowledge, he knew well how to appropriate it.

Thus, in all these great men, the ability to read an antagonist, and learn his true position, was made the fulcrum on which turned the successes of war.

Beauregard was vain of his reputation as an engineer, and this vanity made him a weak opponent in the open field, and for this he dashed away all his breath and strength on the first day's fight at Pittsburg Landing; and when on the second day he met a tenacious fighter squaring away for him, stronger and braver for the action of the previous engagement, he had no strength for the encounter.

Grant seldom had fair trials of strength, for his enemy was generally behind his fortifications, and had thus every desirable advantage. Could he have joined issue in the open field in the style of old Roman warfare, his intuitive knowledge of men and position would have been more apparent, ranking in

this particular with Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon. As it was, it became extremely difficult for his enemies to steal away from him, by night or day, though they had proved themselves remarkable for this kind of strategy.

A line of fortifications, of from one to five miles in extent, becomes a convenient spot to play a thousand cards to ruin the plans of an opposing general, which none but a genius of the first order can successfully meet and overcome. It is not like taking sight at so many pins and then rolling shot and shell to knock them over. A battle-field is an ever-shifting panorama. Each company, or regiment, or brigade, or division, or corps, is not a machine so many yards in length, but is composed of many voluntary integers, and is ever a variable quantity. One minute may change disaster to success, or success to disaster, unless the general holds the minds of all within his grasp.

GRANT IS REMARKABLE FOR HAVING RESOURCES IN HAND.

Whatever the topography of a country, and whatever the difficulties to overcome, he was ready to meet them. When orders were given he seemed to be present, either in person or by his subordinates, to execute them. He rarely made a movement, and then, like Entellus, the aged boxer of Virgil, dealt weighty blows without reaching his antagonist. Nor did he strike for personal or political effect, but for the destruction of the enemies of his country.

The Peninsular campaign was remarkable for masterly strategic movements of the noble old Army of the Potomac, in McClellan's efforts against Richmond. But Richmond was the objective point of another campaign, with fewer troops and smaller resources. That city fell because a general had taken the field who purposed to use every power within

his reach to accomplish his purpose. From his first effort in the department of Cairo, to his last attack on Lee, at the Five Forks, Grant was remarkable for striking blows which contained compound forces. While his own eye surveyed what his own hand held in its grasp—the chief effort of the campaign—he had side issues not unlike the expedition which Lee intrusted to Stonewall Jackson in the valley of the Shenandoah. While the toils of Lee were being woven around McClellan on the Chickahominy, he was at the same time preparing to strike a blow, which continued its reverberations till our forces were safely housed, yet beaten and exhausted, at Harrison's Landing, on the James River.

Within the entire limits of his command, the work of each officer was laid out, and he knew how to time that work with his own, so that it “might, could, would, and *should*” be going on simulta-

neously with his own work. While his own vast combinations were unrolling themselves to view, they were at the same time compelling the enemy to pay all attention to him and his generals.

Nor could they do this without putting forth more than the power of espionage. It was that of instant, vigorous action, to the utmost of their resources. From beyond the Mississippi to the stirring scenes of Old Virginia, this one mind seemed not only to comprehend his resources, but was able to apply the minutest as well as the greatest of these to the common purpose. How this great work was accomplished is incomprehensible to those outside of his own field of vision.

To make this more apparent, we may be allowed to specify.

At Fort Donelson, the army and the navy vied together in the struggle for victory. But when the fleet had been

discomfited and driven back, the army was within two days of a complete victory. Had the fleet followed Grant's style of warfare, Floyd had not stolen that march, to the chagrin and mortification of the Federal army.

That land attack will not soon be forgotten by the quondam friends of secession, who spent weary days and sleepless nights on its fortifications, and who loudly proclaimed that the entire North could not take it—not if every man in the free States were launched upon this Gibraltar of America at once. But what a multitude of foolish boasting and braggadocio was dissipated by Grant's three days' fighting in front of the fortifications of this first formidable stronghold of the "Rebellion!"

The same is true of the terrible contest with Beauregard, at the battle of Pittsburg Landing. Grant has the credit of having fought his forces over three times before the end of that terrible and

momentous Monday, when the friends of freedom at the North had, as it were, their hearts in their mouths, while the sympathizers with treason were making joyful demonstrations in anticipated triumphs over Radicalism and Massachusetts fanatics.

It is clearly proved that in that struggle Beauregard had large forces drawn from the East, as the soldiers met them face to face, and they knew each other, and they were both among the slain on the field of battle.

Equally true is our point, as demonstrated in the taking of Vicksburg. Here, every power was employed by Grant's forces, who were admirable for their persistency, and successful because of the united force of the best war material, the highest style of intelligence, the best disciplined soldiers, and commanded by generals in perfect unity with their great chief.

This element of greatness belonged to

Napoleon, to Frederick the Great, to Cæsar, to Hannibal, to Scipio Africanus, to Fabius, to Marcellus, to Alexander the Great, and finally to all great leaders of eminence.

Perhaps no example of such ability to hold and continuously employ in one direction and upon one subject, for so long a time, and in so great a fulness of detail, has occurred, or will again appear within a century.

The great battles of the nineteenth century have been those of Napoleon and the allied powers in Europe, until those of the "Great Rebellion." The former were single-day battles, the latter were often serial—lasting from three to eight days, night and day, from the Rapidan to the South Anna.

Napoleon at Austerlitz, Wagram, Lobau, and Waterloo, calculated for one day only. So with his foes. But Grant calculated for any length of time.

So also with Lee. But Lee's resour-

ces were limited, and he must piece out his legions with economy and with impregnable earthworks. But Grant was prepared to meet economy with either economy or prodigality, with fortifications or open-field fighting, with strategy or heavy metal, as the exigencies of the campaign required.

His wary and cougar-like antagonist found "*OUR GENERAL*" ever ready for battle, or for motion, but *never for retreat*. No commander that has met Grant on the field can say that he has beaten a retreat.

He ever held his forces in hand, after the shock of battle, thinning a division down to a brigade, or a brigade to a regiment, or a regiment to a company. What he had left were always in hand, not for retreat, but for advance and victory.

Nor is there any perceptible difference between his first regiment of Illinois volunteers, and his trio of armies against Bragg at Chattanooga, or in handling the vast army in the final breaking up of

the Confederacy ; with the divisions under Thomas in the West, Sherman across the country, and Grant and Butler around Richmond.

All these vast and complex movements were in progress at the same time, and were each only as parts of the great whole, and ever required unity of plan, and concert of action, as the several distinct campaigns evolved their long trains of marches, battles, victories, and surrenders. It will need a succeeding age to analyze and appreciate the work of this great commander.

GRANT WAS HAPPY IN HIS SELECTION OF SUBORDINATE COMMANDERS.

The power of *Our* General in reading men, was only second to his ability of drawing them into the friendly meshes of personal devotion. This characteristic is indispensable for the success of all great commanders. Grant's forte was

adaptation. No weakness in himself was so fixed as to cause him to overlook the weaknesses of others, and thus to choose weak favorites for high purposes and positions. Instead of this, he selected the ablest men, after having tried them under his own eye. He did not send to distant departments for celebrated officers as his subordinate commanders, but found them close at hand, and as he needed them; making what he had in hand always available, and causing successful abilities everywhere to rise to their well-earned rank.

Some of his generals came up with meteor-like coruscations, from comparative obscurity, to exalted positions, but did not reach the zenith of glory. Others, having reached this zenith, by a slower process, became resplendent with glory; and although the war-cry has given way to the reign of peace, yet in both cases, to this hour, their lustre has not become dim.

When W. T. Sherman made his famous, yet unsuccessful attack on Vicksburg, losing vast numbers of men, as well as prestige, Grant, true to his better judgment, stood up boldly in behalf of a noble, talented, and deserving general; thus saving a genius to the arms of our country, a future coadjutor in quelling the rebellion, and almost a rival to himself in the public esteem.

Political circles, as well as the press, were opposed to the Spirit of Shermanism, until that great genius hurled his legions upon Johnson's division, and drove him back upon his stronghold at Atlanta, and earned again the laurels awarded by Grant, and which should have been awarded by the people, at his unsuccessful attack on Vicksburg. Sherman evidently is a life-long friend of Grant, and owes as much to *Our General* for the *opportunity* to become great, as to his own kindly stars, in his original and cultivated powers.

Almost as much is true of General Meade. There was a time when Meade had nearly saved his country, when the smoke of battle hung festooned around Gettysburg. But as this war-cloud cleared away, political generals, and would-be military critics, snuffed the air, and foretold dire calamities from the incapacities of the hero of Gettysburg, and forgot the glory of that great field. But Grant knew the qualities of a great soldier without the aid of the kid-gloved gentry at the National Capitol, and he determined to continue Meade in command of the Army of the Potomac, notwithstanding he had once been compelled, by the wary and powerful Lee, to recross the Rapidan. He knew, better than any other man, what Meade had done in that fearful moment, when the legions of the Confederacy were hurled upon the Union troops by the concentrated fury of rebel talent and passion, in that last terrible and bloody onset of Lee.

It was known in advance, all over the South, that Lee was going North, and that he was to make the most gigantic efforts to break through every barrier; and it is said that the best families of the South equipped and sent their choicest troops for the expedition: and when Lee withdrew from the contest, slowly and sullenly southward, he left some of the finest young men of all that country beneath the rich mould of Pennsylvania, and slowly wheeled the torn bodies of others homeward on mournfully attended ambulance-trains; and the wealthy abodes of that sunny land were visited by that mother-spirit of "Rama," refusing comfort in the homes of rebellion.

When, therefore, Grant took his position in the East, as Lieutenant-General, Meade was kept in his position, and it proved the ability of his chief, in reading the military status of his own subordinates, as well as that of the enemy. To

the last General Meade proved himself to be all that his great leader could desire, both in the wise councils of war and in the earnest strife of the battlefield.

The question may here arise, why was not Grant, like other generals, overwhelmed and ill-treated by his jealous under-servants and professed coadjutors? Many a one had been crushed from causes outside of himself, and removed from his command, which was the only place of self-vindication. Pope was beaten, not by Jackson, nor by Longstreet, nor by Lee, nor by all these combined; he was overthrown by forty thousand men under Fitz John Porter and McClellan, who lay quietly between Fairfax Court House and their late landing-place, while those two beautiful specimens of jealousy were quietly looking on, and inwardly laughing to see Lee do his work of death and ruin. For at South Mountain and *Antietam*, that

body of men did what they could and would have done under General Pope at Centreville, had they had opportunity, and no more.

The men under Grant, understanding the nobility of their chief, stayed by him till they could win glory enough for all. They valued social, more than separate glory.

Grant also, in his reports, labored to do every man justice, without extreme laudation, disparagement, or undue reflections.

A remarkable example of this is seen in his treatment of General Granger, at Chattanooga, when he ordered him to the aid of Burnside, in Tennessee.

He utters no invective—he uses no crushing expletives—he manifests no over-towering passion—but he hastens to give the order quietly to Sherman, though he needed him for work nearer himself.

How quickly Sherman was moving

Tennessee-ward, and how soon was the work completed, and his army returning to join their chief at Chattanooga, who were preparing for an invasion of Georgia !

Each man, when ordered by Grant to any post, or commended to the government for any important trust, seemed at once inspired for his new field of action, as if one with the chief in command.

At first the public were not ready to adopt the selections of Grant. But when these selections had been tested, confidence everywhere followed the choice of *Our General*. Then it was understood, that a man of ability was made, when it was known that he had been chosen by this great leader.

While the army under his command were harnessed with his orders and plans, they had at the same time sufficient freedom for the development of personal and independent activities. While there was unity observable to the nation, there was

sufficient variety to show the style and quality of each man's work. Personal identity in his commanders was as evident to every true American, as were their sympathy and co-operation.

Greatness, therefore, did not break forth upon the country, as in the effulgence of the sun's noon-tide radiance, but as from dawn to sunrise, then to quarter-day brightness, and finally, to zenith glory, as by the regular increase of natural laws.

Some men win favor by public display, and lose all this prestige when these emblems of dignity are laid aside. But another class never shine outwardly at the expense of the heart and the brain. With these, buttons and lace are cheap commodities, while sturdy qualities are of priceless value. Glittering reviews and gala-day cheering are at a discount when there is work on hand.

Campaigning, hard marches, and harder fighting, stand far up in their plans of

future greatness; while display and recreation lie far back in the alphabet of their purposes.

GRANT IS KNOWN FOR REMARKABLE Celerity of Movement.

Executive dispatch is a prime quality in a military chieftain. With Grant, "Time was money"—it was advantage—it was success and victory.

A resolution for a proper movement, was the movement itself. Personal comforts, visitors, military honors, must all bow to duties and obligations. Grant's most intimate companion was the saddle. The tent, the map, the field-glass, were his main outfit. He was scarcely on the ground of a new field before his troops and supplies were in motion, and he, like a spirit, was flying from point to point, measuring every movement.

The object of his department was war, the measure of time was the earliest moment.

In all great movements the generals set their watches by his; and his enemies were compelled to do the same or be too late. Nothing but the elements or the providence of God were to thwart his purposes. He seemed to combine the caution of Fabius, the tenacity of Marcellus, with the capacity of Pompey.

He appeared always to know where his army was, what and how much they would do, when the work would be accomplished, and what the result of the enterprise. His dashes were like the coming down of the avalanche—his sieges like the fearful approaches of the prairie's conflagration—his campaigns as the rising and onward moving of the spring flood—his battles like the raging of the thunder-storm—and his victories as the gathering in of a rich harvest from many a fruitful valley.

There is another attribute in the character of *Our General* which must ever

appear in the character of all great commanders—self possession. In Grant this quality seemed to have reached its highest point.

When Beauregard had forced the army under Grant to fall back on the river, at the battle of Pittsburg Landing, before his support under General Buell could reach him, his face wore the same expression, and he directed his movements with as much coolness as if he had been the attacking party, and the day one of victory. On the next day, when his forces were augmented by thousands, he manifested no surprise or joy, and no elation of spirits. This coolness seemed to say, that in no event could *final* victory be snatched from him.

This same coolness seemed also to be infused into all his generals, which made them examples of complete composure, when the most stupendous results hung upon the work of an hour. It is said that no one could so read Grant's coun-

tenance as to tell by its expression how a battle was going.

Whatever the exigency, he came to his decision in an instant, and that instant of decision was a moment of practical issues ; and his plans and intentions were his own until the moment of issued orders.

One thing his enemy might ever know in regard to his intentions—it was to fight. As to which was to be the attacking party depended upon the celerity of the preparations, and who was ready to strike the first blow.

At Chattanooga, his battle orders were supposed to be a review. His lines of battle were the first warning of his intention to fight.

Bragg expected to gaze, from his perch on Lookout Mountain, upon a grand review of Federal troops, and while he was thus gazing, found himself in the midst of a battle, and pursued by an unexpected defeat.

When the entire North were expecting every hour to hear that Grant had recrossed the Rapidan, he was making the best time possible for Spottsylvania Court House, and Lee, with all his efforts, was laboring to anticipate him in the race.

When it was thought that Breckenridge would attack Washington, Lee and all his advisers supposed that Grant would raise the siege of Richmond and pursue him up the Shenandoah valley. But Grant sent Little Phil. Sheridan to watch the Shenandoah, and the "Old Sixth" to take care of Breckenridge, while he kept his own eye on Lee and Richmond.

All this may be attributed to his self-possession, which enabled him to make his foe dance to whatever time he might choose.

Whoever has this perfect self-possession, will either inspire the same in others, or they are at his mercy.

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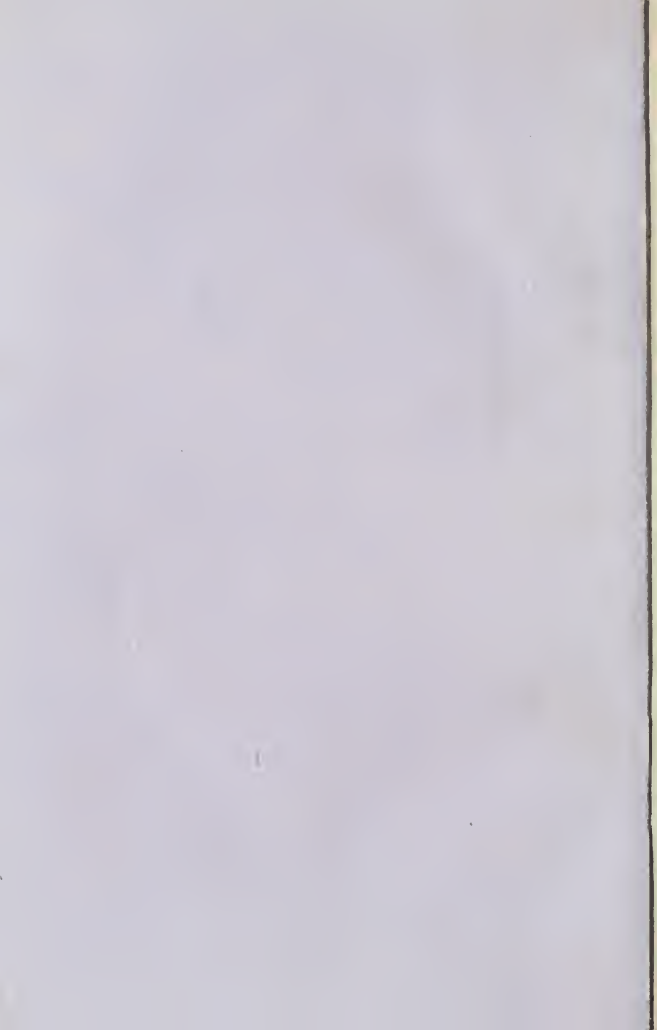
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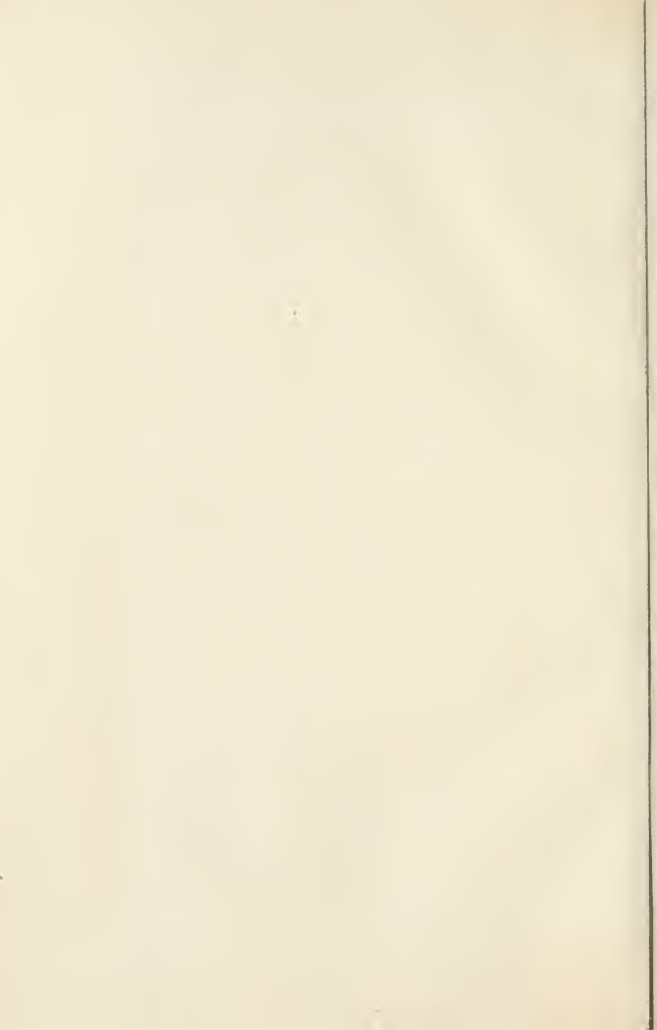
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